

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SAN SA 03147 082038Z

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ACTION SS-30

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FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6136

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S E C R E T SAN SALVADOR 3147

EXDIS

E.O. 11652 - XGDS1, DECLASS INDETERMINABLE

TAGS: PFOR, PBOR, ES, HO

SUBJECT: HONDURAS/EL SALVADOR DISPUTE

REF: SAN SALVADOR 3131

FORT LAUDERDALE MEETING

1. FONMIN BORGONOVO WENT OVER MUCH OF SAME GROUND COVERED BY FON MIN BATRES IN CONVERSATIONS WITH AMBASSADOR SANCHEZ BUT WITHOUT GOING INTO DETAIL. HE DID SAY THAT AGREEMENT HAD BEEN REACHED ON SEVERAL AREAS AND DIFFERENCES HAD BEEN NARROWED DOWN TO THREE REMAINING AREAS. PERHAPS MOST SIGNIFICANT FEATURE OF NEGOTIATIONS WAS CORDIAL ATMOSPHERE MARKED BY FRANKNESS, OPENNESS AND GREATER DEGREE OF TRUST THAN EVER BEFORE AT MINISTERIAL AND HIGH MILITARY LEVELS.

2. ALSO SIGNIFICANT WAS FLEXIBILITY IN GOH POSITION IN THAT FON MIN BATRES WAS WILLING TO CONSIDER ACTUAL OCCUPANCY OF TERRITORY RATHER THAN INSISTING THAT ONLY HISTORICAL DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN DETERMINING THE BOUNDARY. BORGONOVO ATTRIBUTED THIS TO SALVADORAN HISTORICAL RESEARCH WHICH PROVIDED GOES WITH MUCH STRONGER DOCUMENTATION IN FAVOR EL SALVADOR THAN PREVIOUSLY. FOR EXAMPLE, EL SALVADOR IS NOW ABLE TO PRESENT CONVINCING DOCUMENTATION THAT NACOME REGION IN THE FONSECA ISLANDS WERE SALVADORAN, ALTHOUGH NOW OCCUPIED BY HONDURAS.

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SECRET

PAGE 02 SAN SA 03147 082038Z

HOWEVER, EL SALVADOR WAS WILLING TO CONCEDE SUCH AREAS

BASED ON OCCUPATION TO HONDURAS FOR HONDURAN RECIPROCITY
ON THE SAME BASIS IN OTHER AREAS.

POST FORT LAUDERDALE

1. BORGONOVO AND BATRES HAVE BEEN IN CLOSE CONTACT SINCE FORT LAUDERDALE. THEY MET IN GUATEMALA ON AUGUST 1 TO REVIEW THE SITUATION, PARTICULARLY THE PUBLIC RELATIONS ASPECTS AND JOINT MILITARY ARRANGEMENTS AT BORDER. BORGONOVO AND BATRES HAD AGREED TO BATRES POSTURE AND MEETING WITH PRESS AND ALSO TO BORGONOVO MEETING WITH PRESS AT 2:30 TODAY. BORGONOVO WILL ASK MEDIA TO HONOR THEIR RECENT PUBLIC PLEDGE TO CREATE A FAVORABLE CLIMATE FOR NORMALIZATION OF SALVADOR/HONDURAS RELATIONS. FOR PUBLIC CONSUMPTION FUTURE NEGOTIATING SESSIONS WILL BE PUBLICIZED AS STRICTLY MILITARY MEETINGS TO PREVENT BORDER INCIDENTS.

2. FON MINISTERS AGREED TO A MEETING IN GUATEMALA NEXT WEEK. NEITHER FON MIN WILL ATTEND SINCE THEY WILL BOTH BE REPRESENTING THEIR GOVERNMENTS AT PRESIDENTIAL INAUGURATION IN DOMINICAN REPUBLIC. DOMINICAN REPUBLIC WILL BE ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY FOR FON MINISTERS TO CONTINUE DISCUSSIONS. GUATEMALA MEETING WILL CONTINUE TECHNICAL DISCUSSIONS TO TRY TO REACH AGREEMENT ON UNRESOLVED PARTS OF BOUNDARY. REPRESENTATIVES ARE UNDER INSTRUCTIONS TO MAKE FULL DISCLOSURES AND NEGOTIATE OPENLY. UNDER THESE INSTRUCTIONS CHANCES OF REACHING AGREEMENT ARE BETTER THAN AT ANY PREVIOUS TECHNICAL MEETING.

3. BORGONOVO STATED THAT RECENT PRESS STATEMENT ATTRIBUTED TO DEFENSE MINISTER ABOUT FUTURE NEGOTIATIONS AT THE BORDER CITIES (SAN SALVADOR 3071) WAS NOT FACTUAL. THIS STATEMENT WAS SPECULATION ON THE PART OF THE PUBLISHER AND HE HAD BEEN ADMONISHED BY FON MIN FOR STATEMENT. IN COMMENTED THAT STATEMENT ATTRIBUTED TO MIN OF DEFENSE SEEMED TO HAVE BEEN WELL RECEIVED BY THE PUBLIC AND THAT FUTURE ANNOUNCEMENTS BY DEF MIN INSTEAD OF FON MIN MIGHT BE USEFUL IN PREPARING PUBLIC FOR NORMALIZATION. BORGONOVO NOTED THAT DEF MINISTERS WOULD HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR ADDITIONAL DISCUSSIONS AT CONDECA MEETING THIS WEEK, MANAGUA.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 SAN SA 03147 082038Z

4. I ASKED BORGONOVO IF HE THOUGHT SETTLEMENT COULD BE REACHED BEFORE EXPIRATION OF DENUNCIATION OF PACT OF BOGOTA. BORGONOVO SAID THAT HE HAD DISCUSSED THIS PROBLEM WITH BATRES, FROM HONDURAN POINT OF VIEW, AND HE FULLY APPRECIATED THAT CONSIDERABLE PROGRESS MUST BE MADE BEFORE THIS DATE TO PREVENT HONDURAS INITIATIVE UNDER BOGOTA PACT. BORGONOVO SAID THAT HE WAS WELL AWARE OF TIMING NEEDS OF HONDURAS.

5. FINALLY, I ASKED ABOUT BORGONOVO PLANS TO MEET WITH
OAS COMMITTEE OF SEVEN. HE SAID THAT HE APPRECIATED OUR
EFFORTS IN DELAYING MEETING AT LEAST UNTIL END OF AUGUST
DUE TO VACATIONS, ETC. HE SINCERELY HOPES TO BE ABLE TO
REPORT CONSIDERABLE BILATERAL PROGRESS TOWARD SETTLEMENT
WHEN HE MEETS WITH COMMITTEE, AND APPARENTLY BATRES AGREES
WITH THIS APPROACH TO OAS COMMITTEE.
CAMPBELL

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